

New Hampshire Veterans Home Holds Memorial Day Services

TILTON, NH - Memorial Day Services were held at the New Hampshire Veterans Home (NHVH) on Tuesday, May 31, 2011. Residents of the Home, staff, family members, and friends attended the ceremonies.

Barry E. Conway, NHVH Commandant, welcomed residents, staff, and guests. Ralph D. Fontaine, President of the NHVH Resident Council and a World War II Air Force veteran, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

William R. Paige, retired Chaplain of the New Hampshire National Guard, gave the Invocation and the Benediction. Zach Claridge, a student at Tilton School (Class of 2012), read the Memorial Day message.

The Memorial Day Address was delivered by Major General William N. Reddel, III, Adjutant General of New Hampshire. He said, "When you talk to our warriors, they will tell you that their ultimate hope is that their fight will be the last. That they have taken up the cause so that their children and grandchildren won't have to. We aspire toward lasting peace, although history has shown that this has been a temporary condition."

Reddel showed several short videos, including "I Fought for You" and "That's What We Do." He added, "As the unofficial beginning of summer, we must never lose focus of what Memorial Day means. It's not about beaches, picnics, auto races, or sales. It's about honoring and remembering our heroes who died not just for their country, but for their comrades serving next to them."

Reddel reminded the audience that more than one million American service members have died in wars in which the US has been involved since 1623, when the New Hampshire militia was born. He wondered aloud, "What is this thing—this sense of duty? What tugs at a person until he or she says, 'Send me.'?" He quoted the words of President John F. Kennedy, "A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers." Urging the audience to

remember "the true cost of freedom," he said, "I hope we never forget and never let our children or future generations forget the brave men and women and their families who gave all."

The Memorial Day Proclamation from New Hampshire Governor John Lynch was read by Elaine Baker, US Navy veteran of the Korean War. Jackie E. Bonafide, NHVH Program Information Officer, read the Veterans Home Remembrance, naming the eighty-three NHVH residents who passed away during the previous year.

The NHVH Memorial Day Program also featured students from the Lakes Region Christian School, who sang "The National Anthem" and "God Bless America."



PHOTO (left to right): William R. Paige, Retired Chaplain of the New Hampshire National Guard; Commandant Barry Conway, NH Veterans Home (NHVH); Florence Andrus, VFW Auxiliary; Anthony J. Romano, Jr., Marine Corps League, NHVH Board of Managers; Major General William N. Reddel, III, Adjutant General of New Hampshire; Donald Caron, Chairman of the NHVH Board of Managers; Sarah Holmes, Special Assistant for Policy and Projects of the Office of U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen; Jackie Nevin, VFW Auxiliary; Jim Clemons, VFW Post 8401.

Congressional greetings from the New Hampshire delegation representatives were presented by Congressman Charlie Bass and Sarah Holmes, Special Assistant for Policy and Projects of the Office of U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen. Bass expressed his appreciation to the veterans and those serving them at the Veterans Home. Holmes read a letter from Senator Shaheen, saying "While we will never be able to bring back those we have lost, today's gathering is proof that they will never be forgotten. Their memory will live on through all of you, and in the hearts and minds of all Americans." Congressman Frank C. Guinta was unable to attend but sent a letter expressing his thanks to all veterans.



Special guests included Donald R. Caron, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Chairman of the NHVH Board of Managers; Anthony J. Romano, Jr., Marine Corps League, NHVH Board of Managers; Frank Anderson, American Legion Department of NH Department Commander and NHVH Board of Managers; Dave Ouellette, Veterans of Foreign Wars Department Commander and NHVH Board of Managers; NH State Senator Jeanie Forrester; NH State Reps Bill Tobin and Dennis Fields; Mike Horne, Director of the NH State Veterans Cemetery; Mary Morin, Director of the New Hampshire Office of Veterans Services; and representatives of the New Hampshire National Guard and numerous state veterans' service organizations.



Memorial Day photos, clockwise from top left: WWII veteran Ray Plummer salutes the flag, US Congressman Charlie Bass, students from the Lakes Region Christian School, Commandant's Assistant Alice Brown with NH State Rep Dennis Fields.

Founded in Tilton in 1890 as the Soldier's Home for Civil War Veterans, the New Hampshire Veterans home was one of just four New Hampshire nursing homes to win the first Quality of Life Award from the New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) in 2007. NHVH was recognized again in 2009 by DHHS for its continuing commitment to nursing home culture change and quality of life. Located on a 30-acre campus bordering Tilton's 55-acre Buffalo Park conservation area, NHVH has the capacity to care for 250 men and women who have served their country and fellow New Hampshire citizens. As the only long-term care facility in the Granite State that is dedicated exclusively to veterans, NHVH's mission is to provide high quality, professional long-term care services to the Granite State's elderly and disabled veterans with compassion, respect, and dignity.

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